

## **ECONOMIC STIMULUS PAYMENT FACT SHEET**

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO RECEIVE YOUR CHECK**

On February 13, 2008 the President signed into law an economic stimulus package including a payment to be given to many taxpayers to stimulate the economy. Here is what you need to know about the economic stimulus payment:

- To receive your stimulus rebate you **must** file a tax return for 2007, even if you would not normally do so because of your low income.
- You are eligible for the rebate if your "qualifying income" for 2007 is more than \$3,000 and you have a Social Security Number. If you are married and are filing a "married filing jointly" return, both of you must have a valid Social Security Number to qualify.
- "Qualifying income" consists of salaries and wages, self-employment income, Social Security benefits, railroad-retirement benefits, veteran's disability compensation, and pension or survivor's benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- If your gross income is more than \$75,000 (\$150,000 if filing a joint return), your eligibility for the rebate phases out incrementally.
- Eligible individuals will receive between \$300 and \$600. Married couples who are eligible and file a joint return will receive between \$600 and \$1,200. Those with children will get an additional \$300 for each qualifying child.
- In late March, the IRS will send a packet with a letter, filing guidance, the necessary 1040A Form, and an example of a completed form. Older Americans who are Social Security, Railroad Retirement and Veterans Benefits recipients and did not file taxes last year can expect to receive the packet.
- Tax returns filed with the IRS solely for the purpose of receiving a stimulus check are not due on April 15, 2008. Instead you have until October 15, 2008 to submit either a 1040 or 1040A form for your economic stimulus payment.
- The economic stimulus payment is not taxable and won't reduce your 2007 or 2008 refund nor will it increase the amount you owe when you file your 2008 return.
- Your stimulus payment is completely separate from your income tax refund (if you are eligible for a refund). There will be a separate check from the IRS for each.
- The payment can be directly deposited into your bank account if you chose this option on your return or it will be mailed to you. The IRS does not force anyone to use direct deposit and **will not call you** asking for your bank account information.

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) does not count as qualifying income for the stimulus payment.
- If another taxpayer claims you as their dependent on their tax return then you do not qualify for the stimulus rebate.
- If you had at least \$3,000 in yearly Social Security income and were low income otherwise, then you should qualify for the rebate.
- The IRS will figure the amount of the rebate for you after you file your tax return. Checks will be mailed starting in May 2008.
- If you have already filed your tax return for 2007 and your return as filed reflects more than \$3,000 of "qualifying income," then you do not need to do anything else.
- If you have filed your return for 2007 and your return did not add up to the qualifying amount of \$3,000, and you need to include your gross Social Security income to make the \$3,000 eligibility floor, you must file a 1040X Form so as to reflect your gross Social Security. See our fact sheet on completing the form for information on completing the 1040X.

### **Free Tax Help Available**

Individuals who need to file a return this year to receive a stimulus payment may be able to take advantage of thousands of free tax preparation sites nationwide for low-income and elderly taxpayers.

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program provides free tax help to people age 60 and older. As part of the IRS-sponsored TCE Program, **AARP offers the Tax-Aide counseling** program at more than 7,000 sites nationwide during the filing season. For **Georgia's AARP Tax Aide program call 1-866-295-7281** or visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org).

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program provides help to low- and moderate-income taxpayers. Call 1-800-906-9887 to locate the nearest VITA site.



For information on services available to older adults in Georgia,  
call the Division of Aging Services at 1-866-55-Aging (1-866-552-4464).